



**STRONGER BUSINESS  
STRONGER ILLINOIS**

# BUSINESS LEADER

Volume 3 Number 3 November 2017

## Illinois Continues to Fight the Opioid Epidemic



*Lt. Gov.  
Evelyn Sanguinetti*



*Richard Kang, MD  
Illinois Bone & Joint Institute*

**Opioids are taking more  
and more lives every day**

# Success Stories Begin Here.



**NON-RECOURSE** Loans from \$3 to 12 Million.  
Our bridge loans provide the path that leads your value-add  
commercial real estate opportunity into becoming a success story.



# BUSINESS LEADER

www.ilchamber.org

**November 2017**  
**Volume 3, Number 3**  
**Illinois Business Leader**

**Publisher**  
Illinois Chamber of Commerce

**Editor**  
Laurie Silvey  
(217) 522-5512 ext 223  
lsilvey@ilchamber.org

**Advertising**  
Andy Zielonka  
(630) 955-3592  
azielonka@dailyherald.com

**Contributors**  
Grace Haerr  
Laurie Silvey  
Mike Wong

**President and CEO**  
Todd Maisch

Illinois Business Leader is published quarterly by the Illinois Chamber of Commerce, 215 E. Adams St., Springfield, IL 62701. Illinois Business Leader is provided as a benefit of membership in the Illinois Chamber of Commerce. Non-member subscriptions \$100.00 per year (includes sales tax).

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Illinois Business Leader, 215 E. Adams St., Springfield, IL 62701.

Illinois Chamber of Commerce  
215 E Adams Street  
Springfield, IL 62701  
Phone: (217) 522-5512  
Fax: (217) 522-5518  
Internet: www.ilchamber.org  
email: lsilvey@ilchamber.org

© Copyright 2017  
Illinois Chamber of Commerce



## CONTENTS

### Focus

- 4 Women in Engineering

### In Every Issue

- 2 President's Message
- 22 Member Spotlight

### Feedback

- 8 Illinois Fighting the Opioid Crisis
- 12 Orthopedics and Opioids

### Highlights

- 16 Annual Luncheon

### Legal Update

- 20 Prescription Drugs in the Workplace

### Solutions

- 24 Medicare and HRAs

### Connecting

- 26 Cybersecurity Conference

### Advocacy

- 28 Chamber Advocacy
- 32 Chamber Feed

### Advertisement

- IFC** Inland Real Estate
- 3** New Laws Forum
- 7** Best Places to Work
- 11** Superior Ambulance Service
- 14** Mandatory Posters
- 15** Illinois Bone & Joint Institute
- 19** Northrop Grumman
- 19** UPS
- 25** Personnel Planners
- 25** ix Solutions
- 31** Cost Savings Programs
- IBC** Certification Programs
- BC** SmithAmundsen, LLC

16



22



4



## Growing Illinois' Economic Promise



**TODD MAISCH**  
PRESIDENT AND CEO

The Illinois Chamber of Commerce values the economic success of the state. Over the past few months, the Illinois Chamber has called on lawmakers to join the effort in charting a path forward for our job creators by demanding pro-growth policies reach the governor's desk.

We must not allow partisan politics to inhibit the state's ability to succeed. Democrats need to work with Republicans to focus on reforming our workers' compensation system, reworking our tax system, investing in our infrastructure, fixing our legal system and implementing more business incentives vital for our state's success as a competitor.

By focusing on these efforts, Illinois would have a better chance of

securing opportunities like the Foxconn plant, Amazon headquarters, and the Toyota-Mazda plant, which have all recently looked for a state to invest in or are still looking. Although there is no one factor that secures these deals, the Illinois Chamber understands that by focusing on incentives and lowering the cost of doing business, there is a much better chance of bringing large, medium, and small businesses to Illinois.

An important first step towards progress was made in mid-September, the governor signed legislation restoring EDGE. Several provisions in this legislation were first proposed by the Illinois Chamber. This version of EDGE contains major improvements including additional support and assistance for distressed communities across the entire state. The Illinois Chamber believes this is only the beginning of bipartisan efforts to strengthen Illinois' business climate, and it's one step that can help send a message to businesses to choose Illinois.

Also in the past months, the state reached an agreement on funding education opening a window to refocus efforts on pro-business reforms. We took this as an opportunity to call on lawmakers to enact workers' compensation reform, tax reform, and infrastructure investment. The Chamber continues to pursue these efforts by working with state and national officials. For job creators to choose Illinois over its neighbors for business investment, the state's

lawmakers must focus on moving forward with these pro-business initiatives that bring and maintain jobs.

While the Illinois Chamber continues to push for these policies that were on the table at the beginning of budget negotiations there are additional external factors affecting the workplace that are in need of discussion, some of which are included in this issue of the *Illinois Business Leader*.

In this issue, we focus on the opioid epidemic and how it affects the workforce. This crisis is costing employers billions of dollars in higher health care costs, lost productivity, and harm to their communities. We also hear from key business leaders who highlight women in engineering and the importance of workforce diversity.

Additionally, we'll dive into the Illinois Chamber's Annual Luncheon event where Governor Bruce Rauner addressed the crowd and the keynote speaker Al Monaco, president and CEO of Enbridge, gave an inspiring presentation on the future of energy.

We continue to strongly advocate for business-friendly policies that would contribute to Illinois' economic growth. Now, it is essential that our state adopts reforms to fix a broken system and help our employers compete. The Illinois Chamber remains active in the fight for tax reform, worker's compensation reform, infrastructure investment, and Illinois' overall economic promise.

4TH ANNUAL

# NEW LAWS FORUM FOR ILLINOIS EMPLOYERS

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2017

LISLE, ILLINOIS

The New HR Laws Forum focuses on New Laws and  
New Legal Developments which will affect all  
Illinois employers in early 2018.

This forum features  
Illinois attorneys speaking on Illinois laws,  
federal laws and new regulations from agencies.

co-presented by the Illinois Chamber of Commerce and the  
Illinois State Council Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)



**ILLINOIS CHAMBER**  
OF COMMERCE



[www.ilchamber.org/newlawsforum/](http://www.ilchamber.org/newlawsforum/)

## Women Aiming to Bridge the Gap in Engineering

*Boeing is taking greater steps to encourage women to pursue Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) careers.*

In all technology, engineering and math careers, only one in four jobs are held by women. In many organizations, the women who hold those jobs earn only 82 percent of what comparable male co-workers earn. Forward-thinking engineering firms are working hard to change those statistics.

The Boeing Company, for example, has a companywide commitment



*Candice Smith*

to attract and develop the best female talent, as well as to educate and inspire the next generation of woman scientists and engineers,”

Candice Smith says. She is the Director, Global Engineering and External Technical Affiliations for The Boeing Company. Boeing is taking greater steps to encourage women to pursue Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) careers. In 2016, their Boeing Charitable Trust partnered with more than 120 STEM organizations and contributed more than \$18 million toward community initiatives that globally helped inspire an estimated 600,000 young women in STEM.

Christy Crites, Senior Project Engineer at Crawford, Murphy & Tilly, knows that diversity is important for every company.



*Christy Crites*

“Diversity adds different ideas to the mix,” she says. “Plus, women think differently than men. We give an entirely different perspective. It is important that any child feels they can choose any career they desire no matter their race or sex. The difficulty is inherently cultural from my perspective. When girls get to adolescence, there is a sense that females are not supposed to be smarter than the boys so it takes a strong young woman to break that stereotype.”

She pointed out that engineering firms are competing with higher paying health care fields and computer programming for these young people. CMT currently has 26 female engineers, one planner, 17 technical managers and four technicians working with them. They actively recruit for female professionals.

At Hanson Professionals, 28 percent of their workforce is currently women. Satch Pecori, Chairman



and CEO, says the new technology is appealing to a broader group than the old engineering style that was done in the past.

“Three-dimensional design and the other wide variety of technology is more appealing, and exciting to a wider variety of people, both male and female,” Satch says. “Obviously more women are finding it appealing since the percentages are growing and that’s a good thing.”

One key person at Hanson Professionals is Mina Biggs, Vice President of Human Resources and a member of their board of directors.

“As women are graduating with degrees, the numbers still tend to drop off when it comes to the engineering field,” Mina says. “For us as an organization, it is critically important to recruit women because there is a shortage when you are looking at the engineering field and in general, skilled labor. We are looking for ways to build networks with universities early on to begin attracting these young professionals into our organization.”

To that end, Hanson puts a lot of emphasis on their internship program during the summer months.

“We ensure that the students get not only what they would expect on the technical end of an internship



*Satch Pecori*

with an engineering firm, but also really focusing on the non-technical aspects of being in the workforce.

We require all students to pick a topic to present to the management and leadership team at the end of their internship. We present a scholarship based off the presentation as well as their performance reviews during their time with us and this year, a female engineering student received the award.”

Boeing is looking for diversity of thought, diversity of experience, of approach and understanding to help solve the technical and business challenges that they want and need to solve.

*“We’re seeking the best problem-solvers in the world to collaborate on the most difficult technical problems in the world.”*

*—Candice Smith*

*All of the companies we spoke to agreed that women are changing the way the world works.*

“Women make us better!” Candice says. “We’re seeking the best problem-solvers in the world to collaborate on the most diffi-



*Mina Biggs*

cult technical problems in the world. We need the richest and deepest talent pool possible – and that applies to all facets and functions of our business, from design to production to leadership.”

Boeing is a sponsor of the GoFly prize, which challenges inventors and doers all over the world to develop a personal flying device. They are also committed to investing in the STEM community.

“This is evidenced by our partnership with organizations like AeroStar Consulting Corporation whose mission is relevant for raising awareness and readiness for aviation and aeronautical career path opportunities. We also support Project SYNCERE (Supporting Youth’s Needs with Core Engineering Research Experiments) which aims to prepare underrepresented and disadvantaged students to pursue careers in STEM. I’ve volunteered for activities with both of these organizations and am always excited to see so many young ladies showing interest and impact in these areas.”

All three companies have women who are in key roles and highly successful in helping their companies grow. Christy Crites is Group

manager of the Springfield, Illinois wastewater group at CMT. She is also an employee owner and member of the CMT board of directors.

“I manage 19 staff managers that include both engineers and technicians,” Christy says. “We work on planning, design and construction of wastewater treatment plants, collection systems (sewers), and stormwater systems. I enjoy the challenges of engineering as well as seeing what you design be built and operated to improve the environment.”

Additionally, Theresa O’Grady is group manager of water resources in their Aurora, Illinois office. She manages engineers and technicians that work on surveying and many aspects of water resources including water, wastewater and storm water damage. Laura Sakach manages their Labell, Florida office as an airport planner and has been with the company for more than 25 years.

Cindy Loos is vice president at Hanson Professionals and is in charge of their Peoria regional office. Joellen Kein is executive vice president and chief financial officer.

“Joellen has been with us for 22 years,” Satch says. “She was our first financial officer and will be retiring next year. Cindy is the engineer out of the group, Mina has an HR background and Joellen is a CPA. We also have six women in leadership positions for engineering. Frankly, we don’t look at gender here, we look at capability. This industry is dominated by males, but females are increasingly getting into the STEM programs.

This year, we had 11 interns and four of the 11 were females. That's higher than the percentage you see in the industry. They were all engineers. We are definitely seeing an uptake and we like the inclusion of diversity."

Boeing has a multitude of woman leaders involved in their organization.

"We have so many influential woman leaders here at Boeing – women across all areas of our global enterprise," she says. "Around the world, we have woman leaders in our business units, in our commu-

nications and human resources, and in our operations roles. So many women have inspired me personally in our technology and engineering functions. We have women taking us into space and transforming how we design and manufacture our products, how we provide services and support around the world, and how we're taking technologies like autonomy, AI, additive manufacturing – that's just the letter A – to shape the future and change the world. Without these thought leaders, visionary

thinkers, and the uniqueness they bring to the enterprise, I doubt we'd have achieved so many impossibilities in aerospace."

All of the companies we spoke to agreed that women are changing the way the world works.

"All of our leaders – men and women – are collaborators and I'm proud of the work we're doing to drive our goal to be the best aerospace company in the world and our core company values, including a diverse and inclusive workforce."

## ATTRACT AND RETAIN THE TOP TALENT IN YOUR INDUSTRY

*and gain a prestigious company reputation by being identified as one of the Best Places to Work in Illinois!*

### Best Places to Work in IL 2018

*A workplace analysis and competition*

MARKETING PARTNERS



ILLINOIS CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE

PROGRAM MANAGED BY

Best Companies Group▶▶▶

PRESENTED BY

Daily Herald

BUSINESS LEDGER

The Business Resource for Suburban Chicago

### WE'RE LOOKING FOR THE 2018 BEST PLACES TO WORK IN ILLINOIS.

*Here's how it all works—and what you must do to participate:*

- The "Best Places to Work in Illinois" is a combination survey, study and awards ceremony established to identify the top places of employment in Illinois. There are three categories -small-sized companies (15-99 U.S. employees); mid-sized companies (100-499 U.S. employees); and large companies (500 and more U.S. employees).
- Best Companies Group will manage the program and analyze the data from the participating companies to identify the Best Places to Work in Illinois.
- The top-rated companies will receive statewide recognition at an awards celebration and their stories will be featured in a special publication profiling the winners.
- All participating companies (whether ranked or not) will receive detailed data identifying the strengths and weaknesses of their workplace according to what their employees had to say. (A small participation fee funds the analysis by Best Companies Group).

### ENTRY DEADLINE: JANUARY 19, 2018.

To enter your company in this statewide competition, please visit

For additional information, call

[www.bestplacestoworkil.com](http://www.bestplacestoworkil.com)

1-877-455-2159

## Illinois is Fighting Against the Opioid Crisis



Lt. Gov.  
Evelyn Sanguinetti

*“The goal of our action plan is ambitious, but we must turn the tide on this epidemic as aggressively and thoughtfully as possible.”*

—Lt. Gov. Sanguinetti

Opioid addiction is a growing problem, not just in Illinois, but across the country and world. Opioids are taking more and more lives every day. Drug overdoses have become the number one cause of death nationwide for people under the age of 50.

“It is estimated that one in three Illinoisans is directly affected by the opioid epidemic in some way – either from having suffered from opioid use disorder themselves or by personally knowing someone who has struggled with opioids, overdosed or died from an overdose,” Lt. Gov. Evelyn Sanguinetti says. “Opioid overdoses have killed nearly 11,000 Illinoisans since 2008. Just last year, there were nearly 1,900 opioid overdose deaths - more than one and a half times the number of homicides and nearly twice the number of fatal motor vehicle accidents.”

“Every day, 142 people in the U.S. die from overdoses of legal opioids, and deaths from legal and illegal opioid overdoses are growing exponentially,” Dr. Peter McCauley, Regional Medical Executive, Northeast, Cigna Corporation says. “In the U.S. the total economic burden hit an estimated \$78.5 billion in 2013, billions of which was attributed to workplace costs. Opioid misuse is tied to decreased productivity, increased absenteeism, and greater use of workers’ compensation benefits.”

According to the Illinois Department of Public Health, the causes of this crisis are many, but can be linked to four main sectors: (1) doctors, (2) pharmaceutical companies, (3) gov-

ernment, and (4) drug cartels. The prevailing attitudes of patient pain led to a culture of massive over-treatment of pain. Pharmaceutical companies touted medications such as oxycodone as being non-addictive, which fueled opioid prescribing as both physicians and patients were lulled into a sense of safety. Evaluation criteria set by the federal government incorporated levels of pain control as a measure of treatment “quality” created further incentives to overprescribe. And enterprising drug cartels that emulated pizza delivery models for selling their products made cheap and powerful heroin accessible on speed-dial to individuals with opioid use disorder (OUD).

Anyone is susceptible to opioid use disorder. People of all ages, genders, races, and financial situations can become addicted.

“U.S. deaths involving natural, semi-synthetic and synthetic opioids in 2015 totaled: 3,165 for those 24 and under; 8,568 for those aged 25-34; 7,484 for those aged 35-44; 7,595 for those aged 45-54; and 6,277 for those aged 55 and older,” Dr. McCauley says. “However, some groups have been hit harder than others. Overdose rates are higher among non-Hispanic whites and American Indian or Alaskan Natives, for example than among non-Hispanic blacks and Hispanics. Veterans are also particularly prone to developing a substance use disorder, as they often have higher rates of chronic pain vs. the general public.”

He continues, “On a gender basis, overdose rates are highest among men, but the gap between men and women is closing. In 2015, 11,420 U.S. women died from overdoses of natural, semi-synthetic and synthetic opioids, up from 7,770 in 2010. In comparison, 21,671 men died from the same causes in 2015, up from 13,319.”

Dr. McCauley described the effect that opioids have on the human body as difficult.

“Just as heart attacks change the ability of the heart to function normally, opioids fundamentally change the ability of the brain to function normally,” he says. “This alteration in brain function makes it particularly difficult for individuals suffering from opioid addiction to make the difficult choices that lead to recovery. Opioids increase the amount of dopamine in the limbic reward system of the brain, which reduces pain but also causes intense feelings of pleasure. Use can quickly lead to physical and psychological dependence. The limbic system will begin to affect other brain systems that drive judgment, planning, and organization, and will stimulate individuals to seek the pleasure of drug use.”

One of the reasons that opioids are so destructive is that the brainstem controls breathing. Opioids can

help reduce pain, but may also slow or stop breathing.

“Established in the 1990s, the concept of the ‘fifth vital sign’ for pain treatment and management led to an increase in opioid prescriptions prescribed for acute and chronic pain,” Dr. McCauley says. “The increase of substance use disorders is complex and includes several drivers including 1) limited public awareness and understanding, 2) availability of opioids, 3) barriers to early detection and acute treatment, 4) lack of effective chronic treatment options and 5) a lack of alignment between the criminal justice system and the health care system.”

In early 2017, Lt. Gov. Sanguinetti joined a group of 12 state agencies who have been meeting to develop a statewide approach to the opioid epidemic. This group was formalized into the Opioid Overdose Prevention and Intervention Task Force by Gov. Rauner’s executive order in September 2017.

“We recognized that greater organization and coordination between agencies at the state level was needed to combat this epidemic more effectively and efficiently,” Lt. Gov. Sanguinetti says. “We needed to establish common goals and clear



*Dr. Peter McCauley*

*“Given the stigma associated with charged words such as ‘abuse’ and ‘addict’ we’ve made it a priority to eliminate them so that we can focus on finding solutions – and not pointing blame – that position opioid use disorders as the chronic disease it is.”*

*—Dr. Peter McCauley*

*Hospitals, health care systems, insurers, and employers need to have buy-in and support to make the efforts successful.*

lines of communication between stakeholders and all levels of government, and we needed to have a shared roadmap for implementing efforts statewide. The State of Illinois Opioid Action Plan is a strategic plan for more comprehensive, coordinated, and concerted efforts to address the opioid crisis statewide in the upcoming few years.”

Their Action Plan has set an overall goal of reducing opioid-related overdose deaths by 33 percent in three years. Its approach is rooted in the three pillars of Prevention, Treatment and Recovery, and Re-

sponse. The pillars are then broken down into six areas of priority: 1) Safer Prescribing and Dispensing 2) Education and Stigma Reduction, 3) Monitoring and Communication, 4) Access to Care, 5) Supporting Justice-Involved Populations, and 6) Rescue. The strategies can be found in their Action plan document available online.

Cigna is also working to help resolve the issue and prevent it from growing.

“Cigna firmly believes that the opioid epidemic is a national crisis that requires all stakeholders

### **CIGNA’S INITIATIVES INCLUDE:**

- **COMMITTED** to reducing our customers’ opioid use by 25% by 2019 (by April 2017 they were halfway to that goal)
- **PARTNERED** with 170 medical groups (representing more than 64,000 doctors) to sign the United States Surgeon General’s pledge to reduce opioid prescribing and to treat opioid use disorder as a chronic disorder (as of July 2017);
- **COLLABORATED** with the American Society of Addictive Medicine (ASAM) and shared deidentified claims data to improve treatment for people suffering from substance use disorders; and
- **ANNOUNCED** new efforts to support the veteran community, a particularly vulnerable population, including most recently commissioning two studies with the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) to learn more about the views of American medical practitioners, veterans and the general public on the opioid crisis.

to work together,” Dr. McCauley says. “Finding a long-term solution means modernizing the approach to prevention, treatment, and communication regarding opioid addiction. Since 2016, Cigna has led a coordinated, comprehensive response to reduce the use of opioids among our customers and has collaborated with physicians and other parties to find workable solutions.”

Those working on solving the opioid crisis agree that community efforts, legislative involvement, and legal efforts are all necessary components.

“The opioid epidemic is the largest public health and public safety crisis facing Illinois today, and we are engaged with all sectors of government, emergency responders, community agencies, and health care disciplines,” Lt. Gov. Sanguinetti says. “The State Opioid Action Plan represents a collective call to action – while the Task Force can determine how state government can address the problem, regional and local coalitions have the best sense of what approaches do or do not work in particular communities and we will need to collaborate with existing efforts.”

Hospitals, health care systems, insurers, and employers need to have buy-in and support to make the efforts successful.

Task Force members are traveling around the state on a “listening tour” to hear specific needs, feedback on their Action Plan, and get guidance on the next steps. They will collect feedback across the state

and determine the tactical next steps needed to implement their plan and make local priorities state priorities.

“We will need the input of clinicians and health care providers who address the crisis on a day-to-day basis and individuals who have personally suffered from OUD to figure out what implementation activities will best address their needs,” Lt. Gov. Sanguinetti says. “Above all, we need greater public awareness and understanding of OUD and a broader cultural shift in how we

talk about substance use disorder in general. Currently, there is a lot of stigmas associated with substance misuse, which creates barriers to open dialogue and prevents individuals with substance use disorders from seeking treatment. We want to work in communities and share the message that OUD is a chronic disease – similar to other chronic diseases such as diabetes or hypertension – that can be similarly managed and treated with appropriate care, services, and support.”



**SUPERIOR**  
AMBULANCE SERVICE

**Superior Air-Ground Ambulance Service, Inc.**  
is the largest privately owned EMS provider  
in the Midwest. Since 1959, Superior has  
been providing EMS to Illinois communities.



[www.superiorambulance.com](http://www.superiorambulance.com)



# Illinois Orthopedic Practice Takes Opioids Seriously

*“When a patient needs surgery, the better we can set expectations, the less anxiety – the less anxiety, the less pain.”*

—Ritesh Shah, M.D.



Ritesh Shah, MD  
Illinois Bone  
& Joint Institute  
Morton Grove

As most Illinois employers know too well, our nation is in the midst of an unprecedented opioid epidemic. The most recent statistics from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services point back to 2015, when 12.5 million people misused prescription opioids and 2 million people were confirmed to be abusing or dependent on opioid prescriptions.

Even more frightening is that 80 percent of heroin users started out misusing prescription painkillers and moved on to heroin because the prescription drugs were too expensive and too difficult to obtain.<sup>1</sup> To that end, in 2015 there were 828,000 Americans using heroin.

All this points to \$55 billion spent annually, much of this by employers, on the health and social costs related to prescription opioid abuse.<sup>2</sup>

Illinois Bone & Joint Institute (IBJI), the largest independent orthopedic practice in Illinois, takes its role in preventing drug abuse quite seriously and has done so for many years. Long before the issue was making headline news, IBJI instituted a ‘No Dispensing’ policy. To be clear, while IBJI’s physicians can write prescriptions for their patients in need of medication, those prescriptions

are not filled in any of IBJI’s twenty clinics across the greater Chicago and northern Illinois area.

Beyond that policy, IBJI physicians often take additional steps to safeguard their patients who may have need for pain relief.

“The current opioid epidemic has significant impact on how I prepare injured workers for surgery,” notes Ritesh Shah, MD, a board-certified orthopedic surgeon, fellowship-trained in Joint Preservation, Resurfacing and Reconstruction. “Many patients are concerned about building a dependence on or tolerance to opioids as a result of post-surgical pain. This is why post-operatively I don’t like to rely much on narcotics to address pain and many times we don’t use them at all — there are other viable options”

Setting realistic expectations for his patients, in Shah’s estimation, is the most important factor to help them manage pain. “I have a frank discussion with the patient and I’m very clear that there *will* be some pain. We discuss their expectations surrounding when they’ll return to work and to the activities of daily life, and how their interpersonal relationships may be affected. I want them to



bring their loved one to the pre-op surgical appointment because we set clear expectations for everyone.”

Richard Kang, MD, a board-certified orthopedic surgeon, fellowship-trained in Sports Medicine and Shoulder Surgery, takes a similar approach and asserts that it is the clinician’s responsibility to be forthright about the potential for dependency. “Pain is expected and a normal feeling in the setting of injury and surgery. If and when prescribed, narcotics should be given to control the pain, rather than to completely eliminate the pain.” Kang also points to non-narcotic options “there are other modalities to control the pain without a narcotic — including NSAIDs, ice, rest, therapy, injections, or oral steroids.”

Second to making it clear to the patient that there will be pain but there are non-opioid options to control it, Shah stresses the importance of mobility during the recovery process. “We get the patient up and moving shortly after surgery, within an hour or two. Stiffness brings

on pain, mobility reduces pain,” he explains.

When asked if there are cues the physicians look for that may indicate a patient has the potential to develop a dependence on narcotic medication, both look to whether the patient is currently using a narcotic to control joint pain. “If they say ‘yes’ then there is a chance their pain receptors are modified, so when possible we take a collaborative approach and work with a pain management physician, a physiatrist and others to ween them off of the narcotics pre-surgery,” says Shah.

Additionally, Kang notes that some patients may not have had exposure to narcotic medications but



Richard Kang, MD  
Illinois Bone  
& Joint Institute  
Barrington

*“... If and when prescribed, narcotics should be given to control the pain, rather than to completely eliminate the pain.”*

—Richard Kang, MD

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.asam.org/docs/default-source/advocacy/opioid-addiction-disease-facts-figures.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.hhs.gov/opioids/about-the-epidemic/index.html#us-epidemic>



*You are not alone, there are people who care about your well-being.*

may still be susceptible to becoming dependent and there are clues that a physician must heed. “These injured workers may be highly sensitive to your examination and present with pain out of proportion to their pathology. I have found that these patients tend

to have a lower threshold for pain and, if prescribed, could remain on a

narcotic for a longer period of time.” Again, he points to the need for the alternative modalities – mobility, ice, NSAIDs, etc.

Kang offers advice for patients who self-identify as having an addictive personality (i.e. are prone to developing addictions) and who are therefore reluctant to move forward with surgical intervention for their joint pain. “Be honest with your healthcare provider, as well as your trusted friends and family. You are not alone, there are people who care about your well-being.”

**Updates**   
**coming soon!**

Now accepting pre-orders for updated mandatory posters

Shipping December 1 to meet all new requirements

[ilchamber.org/labor-law-posters](http://ilchamber.org/labor-law-posters) or [rkrekel@ilchamber.org](mailto:rkrekel@ilchamber.org) to order





**ILLINOIS  
BONE & JOINT  
INSTITUTE®**

Move better. Live better.  
**Work better.**

Known for our integrity and efficiency, IBJI performs medical evaluations critical to litigating workers compensation cases:

- Independent Medical Exams
- Independent Functional Capacity Evaluations
- Record Reviews (IBJI works directly with physician offices to gather all critical documentation)

With more than 100 board-certified and fellowship-trained physicians and surgeons focused strictly on musculoskeletal health, and 20+ offices across the greater Chicago area, we offer the convenience and clinical expertise to effectively and proficiently serve you and your clients needs.

Visit <http://www.ibji.com/workers-compensation-ime> or call 847-954-7698, we are eager to work with you.

We provide expert & objective resources.

Our Workers' Compensation administrative team is dedicated to providing the highest level of customer service, ensuring ease of scheduling, case management, and seamless communication of exam and evaluation results.

Learn more about IBJI's employer and injured workers services, visit us at

[ibji.com](http://ibji.com)

## Annual Luncheon Focuses on Stronger Business

*Nearly 500 members, legislators, and guests attended the successful event this year.*

The 2017 Illinois Chamber of Commerce Annual Luncheon was held on September 28 at the Drake Hotel in Chicago. Nearly 500 members, legislators, and guests attended the successful event this year.

The Illinois Chamber's six policy councils hosted their annual pre-event reception for a standing room only crowd. Sponsors for the networking included Kemper Corporation, AmTrust Financial, DLZ Illinois, Grant Thornton, Marathon Petroleum Corporation and CITGO Petroleum Corporation.

Following the reception, attendees filled the Gold Coast Ballroom for the main event. Board chairman, Tony Reinhart, started things off with a welcome to our special guests and recognized some of the Illinois Chamber's long-time members who were in attendance. Lt. Gov. Evelyn Sanguinetti then stepped up to introduce Gov. Bruce Rauner, who

highlighted points about the ongoing battle to make Illinois stronger and better for business.

After guests enjoyed a plated lunch, Al Monaco, President and CEO for Enbridge Inc. took the stage. He spoke about the Future of Energy in an enjoyable and informative speech. He talked about technology, efficiency, connectivity, and leadership and how Enbridge is working to put them all together. Todd Maisch, President, and CEO of Illinois Chamber, then joined him on stage for a Fireside Chat with a Q and A session.

The final portion of the day was the Edie Awards, presented in partnership with the Illinois Economic Development Association. The awards are given each year to recognize those who imagine, design, invest, build and bring jobs, growth, and prosperity to Illinois companies. This year's awards were sponsored by Nicor Gas, and Marie LaPorte and Tom Kallay assisted with present-

ing the awards to the winners. Five deserving companies received Edies this year. Zurich North America was nominated by the Village of Schaumburg and received the award for the development of their new headquarters there. Target was nominated by the DeKalb County Economic Development Corporation for the upgrade of their DeKalb regional distribution center into a much larger, upstream distribution center.

Fuyao Glass North America was nominated by the Economic Development Corporation of Decatur and Macon County, as well as the Greater Decatur Chamber of Commerce. They recently located in Decatur after renovating a former PPG plant for their use. The Illinois Tollway was nominated by HNTB Corporation for their reconstruction and widening of 62 miles of roadway on I-90. Amazon has added two distribution centers in Illinois; one in Edwardsville and one in Romeoville, bringing significant benefits to their communities. Amazon Romeoville was nominated by Village of Romeoville, and Amazon Edwardsville was nominated by the Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce. Congratulations to all the winners.

The luncheon then adjourned, but the networking continued into the afternoon. Thank you to all who attended, as well as our speakers and sponsors.



*(Top photo) Todd Maisch looks on as Gov. Bruce Rauner addresses attendees about the ongoing battle for a stronger and better business climate. (Bottom photo) Al Monaco and Todd Maisch take questions from the crowd during their Fireside Chat.*

*Congratulations to the 2017 Edie Award winners. Winners included Zurich North America, Fuyao Glass, Illinois Tollway, Target, and Amazon Romeoville and Edwardsville. Thank you to Nicor Gas for sponsoring this year's awards.*





Illinois Chamber members  
save up to 34%\*



The Illinois Chamber of Commerce is proud to bring you valuable discounts on the products and services you need. The UPS Savings Program has recently been improved for members, to provide increased value, and is available for both new and existing UPS customers. Enroll today and make the most of your membership.

To enroll, simply:

**Call:** 1-800-MEMBERS (1-800-636-2377) M-F, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. EST

**Visit:** [savewithups.com/ilcoc](http://savewithups.com/ilcoc)



ILLINOIS CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE

\*See [savewithups.com/ilcoc](http://savewithups.com/ilcoc) for specific services and discounts. All discounts apply to the effective UPS Daily Rates at the time of shipment and shall be applied on a weekly basis, unless otherwise specified. UPS, the UPS brandmark and the color brown are trademarks of United Parcel Service of America, Inc. and are used with the permission of the owner. All rights reserved.

## Prescription Drugs in the Workplace



Mike Wong

*First and foremost, employers should re-evaluate their drug policies and testing procedures and understand the potential legal implications.*

One of the first questions I ask when providing drug and alcohol training to managers, supervisors and employees is “What is the most commonly used illegal drug?” Typically, the response that I get will be alcohol (albeit not illegal) or marijuana. What most do not realize until the training is that prescription drugs, in particular opioids, are the most commonly abused illegal drug. Prescription opioids include hydrocodone, oxycodone, morphine, codeine and fentanyl, while illegal opioids include heroin.

Opioid use in the United States has started to take on a whole new form and is now commonly referred to as the opioid epidemic. Illinois has not escaped the opioid epidemic; in 2016 there were 2,278 drug overdose deaths of which over 80% (1,826) were opioid related. The number of opioid related deaths in 2016 was an increase of over 30% of the opioid related deaths in 2015 and an increase of over 70% of the number of opioid related deaths in 2013.

In looking at these numbers, it is important to understand that these are only the deaths – not the actual number of individuals using or abusing opioids. In a recent study by the National Safety Counsel, over one in three Illinois residents (35%) reported being impacted by opioid/heroin use by knowing someone (self, family/friend, co-worker/co-workers’ family, or neighbor/neighbor’s family) that started using opioids/heroin, became addicted to opioid/heroin, survived an opioid/heroin overdose or had died from an

opioid/heroin overdose. Indeed, one issue with the opioid epidemic is that the gateway to opioid use does not always come from illegal activities, but can start out with a legitimate legal prescription. When there is a valid use for a prescription drug, an individual can feel like they are not doing anything wrong and their use can quickly turn into a slippery slope of addiction, activities that negatively impacts their work performance and potentially illegal activities. As a result of this, the opioid epidemic does not discriminate and can be found across all demographics, industries and positions.

One of the concerns with opioids for employers is that it is more difficult to tell if someone is under the influence or using opioids or heroin than other more traditional drugs. For instance, opioids and heroin do not come with symptoms or indicators that are easy to perceive like with alcohol – a smell, shaking hands and movements, and behavior changes; or with marijuana – a smell, red eyes, delayed reaction time, anxiety, and lack of coordination. With opioids, it is often difficult for employers to make the connection between an employee appearing groggy, sleepy or forgetful in the workplace to being linked to drug use. Indeed, what employers will typically see, if anything at all, is a gradual decline in an employee’s attendance and performance, until the employee loses their job or stops coming to work altogether.

The traditional tool of employers to identify and prevent drug and

alcohol use within the workplace is drug testing. Pre-hire drug testing can be effective in preventing illegal opioid users from joining the workforce. However, drug testing is not always effective where the opioid user has a legal prescription or where the individual is not yet an opioid user. Reasonable suspicion drug testing can also be effective, but first requires reasonable suspicion of opioid use which can be difficult to identify.

So what does this leave? First and foremost, employers should re-evaluate their drug policies and testing procedures and understand the potential legal implications. For example, drug testing can be modified to test for legal prescription medications, but in order to avoid a violation of the ADA the applicant or employee must be able to provide an explanation for the positive drug test, such as a prescribed medication. Additionally, employers must realize that even if the employee is using prescription medication, there may be an underlying medical condition that they need to be aware of to avoid any kind of disability discrimination claim.

Next, employers should consider questioning its health care benefit carrier and workers' compensation carrier on what actions they are taking to address the opioid epidemic and collaborating with them on any specialized programs or options for addressing. This can include learning about whether the carrier has programs for the conservative use and risk of prescription opioids, an

opioid management program and/or a prescription benefit management program, which can help in preventing prescription medication abuse and identify the abuse of prescription medications. In doing so, employers should also consider investing in an employee assistance program (EAP), which can help employees avoid or address addiction.

Another investment that can pay dividends is management and employee education. Better training and education for not only management, but also employees regarding the impacts of opioids, how to identify opioid use and how to address opioid abuse. Management training can help make management more aware of how to identify potential issues before they occur and get employees help before it escalates to more serious problems. This includes not only taking into consideration the symptoms of opioid and other drug use, but also recognizing changes in how employees are acting, their performance, their attendance, any recent injuries they have had and any other issues that could indicate drug abuse. Employee training can help employees understand the danger of opioids, how the use of legal use of prescription opioids can lead to addiction, and what steps can be tak-



*...employers should re-evaluate their drug policies and testing procedures and understand the potential legal implications.*

en to seek assistance. Of course, any training should be tailored to include information regarding the Company's policies, drug testing, benefit programs and reassurances regarding the Company's commitment to providing confidential and accessible help and treatment.

Finally, one thing to remember is that despite the high numbers of deaths in 2016 in Illinois, Illinois is still behind many states in its exposure to the opioid epidemic. Indeed, in some places manufacturing employers have found using pre-hiring drug testing was not effective. The reason for this is it significantly increased the number of applicants they have had to go through in order to hire for a position or was making it near impossible to fill their staffing needs due to applicants not returning after learning there was drug testing or applicants consistently failing the drug test.

## Chocolate Uplift Makes Sweet Donations



*For every box of chocolates sold, Chocolate Uplift makes a donation of a meal of rice for a formerly-trafficked child at the CREER Africa Rescue Center ...*

Valerie Beck founded Chicago Chocolate Tours in 2005. They were the first chocolate tour company, and she grew the company nationwide. In 2014, she rebranded to Chocolate Uplift, because they shifted their focus to wholesale and retail distributing of craft chocolate and sustainable cacao.

“Chicago is my hometown, and it’s a wonderful distribution hub nationally and internationally,” Valerie says. “The weather is very good for chocolate and cocoa beans, because it’s not hot or humid most of the year!”

The chocolate tours were an idea to introduce chocolate lovers to the small-batch chocolate shops and bakeries of Chicago. The company quickly grew to become well-known and has won awards, spreading to Philadelphia and Boston in 2009, as well as other cities. The idea came when Valerie was a 19 year old Harvard College senior studying abroad at the Sorbonne in Paris. She had been focused on chocolate since early childhood when she told her parents that she would only drink milk if it were chocolate.

“In Paris, I fell in love with truly fine chocolate, and started taking my friends on informal excursions to my favorite chocolate and pastry locations there and in Belgium,” Valerie says. “Later after graduating from Harvard Law School, I practiced law in Chicago, and Europe, and took the opportunity during my time in Europe to deepen my knowledge of chocolate and pastry.”

Chocolate Uplift continues to do well and grow, as more chocolate makers enter the fast-growing artisan chocolate market. Valerie also notes that more chocolate lovers are asking where their chocolate comes from and demand slavery-free chocolate made from socially and environmentally sustainable cacao.

Recently, Chocolate Uplift launched a sustainable chocolate subscription box, following the idea of the popular makeup subscription boxes, but with chocolate. Each month, subscribers receive four chocolate bars that are chosen by Valerie.

“I select the chocolates in alignment with my 5 Ss of chocolate,” Valerie says. “Those are sustainable, slavery-free, soy-free, small-batch, and scrumptious! We do monthly or quarterly subscriptions or people can order a single box – one and done.”

For every box of chocolates sold, Chocolate Uplift makes a donation of a meal of rice for a formerly-trafficked child at the CREER Africa Rescue Center in Cote d’Ivoire, which helps kids who escaped from the bulk cacao farms that supply big industrial chocolate brands. Every box also contains a friendship bracelet from Peru, to honor the original South American heritage of cacao.

Valerie joined the Illinois Chamber’s International Business Council for help with introductions to government and trade representatives of cacao growing nations.

“I explore importing their cacao for my chocolate maker clients, as ef-



efficiently as possible,” Valerie says. “I am also receiving assistance with overseas sales of the chocolate brands in my portfolio.”

Chocolate Uplift has leveraged Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to continue to grow her international business.

“I realized that many of my small-batch chocolate maker clients were buying small quantities of specialty cacao from the same exporters,” Valerie says. “If I can buy a larger quantity of that cacao, and distribute it, everyone wins, from the farmers who can sell more of their harvest, to the chocolate makers who can receive the cacao with greater ease and efficiency, to the chocolate lovers who gain reliable and optimized access to exciting craft chocolate brands whether direct from the chocolate maker, from a retailer, or from Chocolate Uplift subscription boxes.”



*Chocolate Uplift founder, Valerie Beck with cacao pod.*



*(Top photo) Cacao at Violet Sky Chocolate from Cacao Verapaz in Guatemala. (Bottom photo) Chocolate Uplift chocolate subscription box.*

# Medicare and HRAs, the Perfect Pair

By Grace Haerr

*HRAs are employer-sponsored and employer-funded arrangements, which provide retirees tax-free reimbursements for eligible expenses like Medicare premiums, co-pays, deductibles as well as vision and dental expenses.*

As health care costs continue to soar, many companies seek alternative solutions to provide employee coverage, while managing costs and limiting their liability. Some businesses are moving retirees to Health Reimbursement Arrangements (HRAs) so they can continue to provide them the coverage they need.

HRAs are employer-sponsored and employer-funded arrangements, which provide retirees tax-free reimbursements for eligible expenses like Medicare premiums, co-pays, deductibles as well as vision and dental expenses. Moving retirees away from a group plan saves on expensive monthly premiums and out-of-pocket costs.

For example, monthly 2017 Medicare premiums are approximately \$353, which includes Medicare Part B (\$134), Medicare Part D average rates (\$61) and Medicare Supplement Plan F (\$158).

On average, monthly group health plan premiums based on the metallic tier of coverage for a 65-year old employee range from \$765 (Bronze) to \$1,160 (Platinum). The HRA can save employers as much as \$806 per month per employee! Annual savings per Medicare-eligible

employees range between \$6,554 and \$11,287!

Aside from the obvious cost savings, there are additional advantages to businesses when retirees are moved to HRAs:

- all employer contributions to the plan are 100% tax deductible to the employer, and tax-free to the employee.
- these arrangements allow companies to control health care costs by establishing a limit on contributions, which in turn, allows them to clearly forecast costs.
- it relieves a burden from administrative personnel and allows them more time to handle other important issues.

Interested in learning more about HRAs for your Medicare-eligible employees? Call IXSolutions at 866-472-0892 or visit [www.ixshealth.com/ilchamber-medicare](http://www.ixshealth.com/ilchamber-medicare).

IXSolutions is a valued partner of the Illinois Chamber of Commerce. For over 29 years, we've specialized in providing IL Chamber members with cost effective solutions for their health insurance and benefit needs.

SAVE MONEY WITH

# THE CHAMBER'S

UNEMPLOYMENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM



## PERSONNEL PLANNERS WILL

- **become your agent**, receiving claims through the new data exchange provided by the state.
- **reply to your claims**, using all the appropriate issues the separation and or the claim raises.
- **appeal adverse decisions** to hearing and provide you with hearing representation.
- **audit your unemployment charges** each quarter
- and they will **maintain a portal for you** where you can see the status of your claims in real time.

This last is a great management tool, especially if you operate multiple but similar corporations. The service is inexpensive, often less than an awarded unemployment claim. If you are using a competing service, please know that our service through Personnel Planners is of the highest quality and you think to support the Chamber by switching. But you don't need to consider a change for this reason – Personnel Planners is a superbly qualified claims administrator. The Chamber is proud to offer you its program.

**Get a quote:** <http://personnelplanners.com/ilchambercontact/>



# INTRODUCING

## The Illinois Chamber of Commerce Benefits Exchange

Your complete solution for health insurance and employee benefits:



Health



Disability



Dental



Medicare



Life



Vision

**BEST RATES GUARENTEED  
OVER 100+ PLAN OPTIONS  
BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION- AT NO COST**

**NewSolutions4You.com**



1-866-472-0892



## Second Annual Cybersecurity Conference



*Cybersecurity is an issue that impacts all of us, regardless of the size of the business or your job title. It's not a matter of IF you will be hacked, it's a matter of WHEN.*

Just about every day, news outlets are reporting on the next significant breach. Cybersecurity is an issue that impacts all of us, regardless of the size of the business or your job title. It's not a matter of IF you will be hacked, it's a matter of WHEN. The second annual Cybersecurity Conference on July 20 brought together public and private entities to discuss policy and provide best practices in cybersecurity to help businesses prepare for a breach.

The Illinois Chamber partnered with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to host the conference in Glen Ellyn this year. Ben Brockschmidt, Vice President of Policy for the Illinois Chamber of Commerce and Vince Voci, Senior Policy Manager for the

U.S. Chamber of Commerce, opened the event by welcoming the attendees and giving an overview of the day.

Kirk Lonbom, Chief Information Officer for the State of Illinois, reviewed how his department is working to modernize and protect their vast amount of information. Their two primary goals are information security and cyber-resiliency. Not only is it essential to protect data from unauthorized disclosure, but it is imperative to guarantee reliable access to mission-critical information. The ability to anticipate, withstand and recover from cyber-events is vital, and it's important for the State to evolve and improve in pace with the ever-changing cyber-landscape.

Next, Michael Papay, Vice President and Chief Security Officer from Northrop Grumman spoke from the aerospace and defense industry perspective. He discussed what companies can do right now to get ahead of the cyber threat. He also talked about business models to consider as enterprises move forward toward cloud and mobile solutions and how to keep information safe.

A very interesting panel discussion was moderated by Colin Gainer, a partner at SmithAmundsen Law Firm. His discussion centered around the federal agencies and their role in cybersecurity. Representatives from the Secret Service, Homeland Security, and the Federal Bureau of Investigations explained their agencies' responsibilities and how they differ from each other.

Tyler Diers, Director of Legislative Relations for the Illinois Chamber, walked attendees through the myriad of legislation emerging from the General Assembly this year. He analyzed the bills regarding emerging technologies, cyber-specific bills, and regulations, describing those that would help businesses and those that will hinder progress and enterprise.

Will Durkee, Director of Security Solutions for TSC Advantage, explained the resources third-party providers have available and how they work with businesses to maintain business continuity and prevent breaches.

Anders Norremo, Founder, and CEO of Third Party Trust, continued the day with his informative talk about working with companies to navigate the management and securing of their data, without violating the legal and regulatory framework challenges.

Energy is vital to our survival, and the next panel discussion discussed our dependency on a cyber-resistant framework for the



*Energy infrastructure is one of the most vulnerable industries for cyber attack. Heath Knakmuhs, Professor David Nicol, and Dominic Saebler, answered questions about how government and industry are working to make the energy delivery system more secure and resilient. Katie Stonewater, Executive Director of the Chamber's Energy Council Moderated.*

industry. Heath Knakmuhs from U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Institute for 21st Century Energy, Dominic Saebler of Illinois Commerce Commission's Office of Cyber Security and Risk Management, and Professor David Nicol from the University of Illinois Cyber Resilient Energy Delivery Consortium gave attendees an understanding of the work being done to keep our energy industry safe from cyber attacks.

Several legislators provided videotaped messages about the importance of cybersecurity to our nation and to the success of Illinois' business-

es. Thank you to Rep. John Shimkus, Rep. Adm Kinzinger, Rep. Mike Quigley, and Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi for taking the time to put these videos together for our attendees.

Attendees left with a greater understanding of the risks of cyber attacks, ways to protect their businesses from breaches, and information about why it is so important to stay up-to-date and vigilant no matter the size or type of business. Thank you to all who attended, our speakers and sponsors, and our co-hosts, U.S. Chamber of Commerce.



*(Photo far left) Tyler Diers analyzed the legislation involving cyber security and which of the multitude of bills will help or hinder businesses in Illinois.*

*(Photo at left) Keynote speaker Michael Papay of Northrop Grumman answered the question, "what action can we take right now to get ahead of the cyber threat?"*

*Congressman LaHood also discussed the regulatory reforms that have been put in place since the Trump administration has been in D.C. ...*



## Chamber Sits Down with U.S. Congressman Darin LaHood

The Illinois Chamber hosted U.S. Congressman Darin LaHood (R-IL 18) in Springfield for a discussion on D.C. policy. Congressman LaHood spoke about the upcoming tax reform debate, which the Illinois Chamber sees as a major issue for our members. Congressman LaHood also discussed the regulatory reforms that have been put in place since the Trump administration has been in D.C., which he noted is perhaps the greatest accomplishment of the new administration so far. The Chamber continues to engage with our congressional delegation for responsible reforms for the business community in D.C.

## Illinois Has Shot In Amazon Hunt

Sept. 11 Illinois Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Todd Maisch was on WTAX Radio discussing Illinois' chances of landing Amazon's second headquarters, a conversation currently sweeping the nation. Illinois is already a location with Amazon jobs that has nine fulfillment centers in the state, and Illinois has a fair chance. There are a lot of factors that go into the decision. This is why the Illinois Chamber is adamant about Illinois remaining focused on economic development.



## Brockschmidt Defends Illinois Waterways

Illinois Chamber of Commerce Executive Director of the Infrastructure Council and Vice President of Policy Benjamin Brockschmidt discusses the impact the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Brandon Road report on Asian carp released on Aug. 7 may have on Illinois' waterways. The Brandon Road report concluded that the best option to combat Asian carp available is a \$275 million plan to install a combination of electronic and sound barriers by the Brandon Road lock and dam on the Illinois River, near Joliet.

The Illinois Chamber recognizes the Illinois waterways contribute over \$6.4 billion to Illinois' economy, annually saving shippers \$860 million and continues to analyze the report until everyone knows the full extent it would have on Illinois' economy.

## International Business Council Talks NAFTA with Mexican Delegation

Wednesday Aug. 23, the Illinois Chamber of Commerce's International Business Council in partnership with the Trade Commission and the Consulate General of Mexico in Chicago organized a roundtable with a delegation of ten representatives from the Mexican Federal Assembly to discuss NAFTA and the Agricultural Sector at the Chamber's Springfield office. The group, which included seven of the twenty-eight members of the Agricultural Commission at the Mexican Legislature and two representatives of the Mexican Association of the Agricultural Development Secretaries, was led by Mexico's Congressman German Escobar Manjarrez, a farmer and Chairman of the aforementioned Agricultural Commission.



*Attendees and highlights from the NAFTA meeting held at the Illinois Chamber offices in Springfield.*

Additional participants included the Illinois Soybean Association, Illinois Farm Bureau and Growmark, Minority Speaker for the House's Agricultural and Conservation Committee State Representatives Charles Meier, and Chairman of the International Trade and Commerce Committee Andre Thapedi. "NAFTA is the most important trade agreement for the United States and, most certainly, for Illinois" said Laura Ortega, the Chamber's International Business Council executive director.

Additionally, Illinois Chamber President and CEO Todd Maisch met with Canada's Consul General John Cruickshank in Chicago to discuss NAFTA in relation to Illinois and Canada.

## Fairer Legal System, Better Business Climate

A fairer legal system would help pave the way for a better business climate. According to a report from the U.S. Chamber Institute for Legal Reform, Illinois' legal climate is ranked 48th among U.S. states. This is more reason the Illinois Chamber supports Illinois to pass comprehensive legal reform. In order to keep Illinois competitive with other states Illinois must take a multifaceted approach and legal reform is one of those pieces.



*Chamber at the U.S. Capitol with Speaker Paul Ryan's staff and the White House with Gary Cohn the Director of the National Economic Council*



## Chamber Meets with Top Advisor Gary Cohn at the White House

Illinois Chamber advocates Keith Staats and Benjamin Brockschmidt, attended a series of meetings in Washington with members from Wintrust Financial Corporation, Takeda Pharmaceuticals, John Deere, GROWMARK, Motorola Solutions, The Maschhoffs, and Tate & Lyle, on Sept. 13 to discuss tax reform. The meetings focused on the importance of a simplified tax system for a stronger business environment.

Discussions took place at the United States Capitol with Speaker Paul Ryan's staff, the White House with Gary Cohn the Director of the National Economic Council, and a final meeting at the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

The Illinois Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to improving Illinois' business climate. Our tax system needs to be reformed to ensure it's not damaging our business community. We are continuing to work with state and federal officials on this issue and value all those, including U.S. Rep. Peter Roskam (IL-6) and U.S. Rep. Rodney Davis (IL-13), who have hosted local tax reform roundtables where we joined in on the discussion to keep the need for a better tax system federally and statewide.

## Energy Council Filed Amicus Brief on Zero Emission Credit Appeal

The Illinois Chamber of Commerce filed an amicus brief with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit earlier September, asking the Court to overturn the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois' dismissal of Electric Power Supply Association et al. v. Anthony M. Star et al. Also known as the ZEC case. The Court accepted the brief for consideration with the appeal and we anticipate oral arguments, should they be granted, to begin later this fall.

We believe it is important for the Court to fully evaluate and overturn the dismissal for there to be a substantive review of the zero emission credit provisions of the Future Energy Jobs Act. The ZEC program imposes a substantial economic burden on Illinois businesses and disrupts our competitive electricity market. The brief argues those points and can be read [here](#).

# COST SAVINGS PROGRAMS FOR MEMBERS

[www.ilchamber.org](http://www.ilchamber.org)



These programs are exclusively offered to Illinois Chamber members.

Details are linked on the home page sidebar.

**UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS MANAGEMENT** This service saves companies money by fighting unwarranted unemployment claims and lowering unemployment tax rates. Personnel Planners is an award-winning company, first in the nation for claims administration, easily able to handle large or small employers, and will get companies better results!

**ILLINOIS CHAMBER PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE EXCHANGE** Illinois Chamber partners with IXSolutions to offer access to group and individual health insurance plans including Medicare. Members who use the program can receive free benefits administration system to help manage employees, payroll integration, year-round compliance support and the best rates guaranteed.

**UPS SHIPPING** Illinois Chamber members who sign up through this program can save up to 34% on shipping costs, even if the company already has a UPS account. The program offers special services and shipping discounts to save time and money.

**MANUFACTURERS' NEWS INC** Illinois Chamber members receive a 20% discount off the list price of the Illinois Manufacturers Directory®, Illinois Services Directory and EZSelect.com online subscriptions. This is a valuable resource for finding new customers by accessing company profiles of 400,000 US manufacturers and 25,000 Illinois service businesses.

**IWORKZONE** Illinois Chamber members receive a free system and private employer discount. iWorkZone is a web-based suite of talent recruitment, filtering, on-boarding and retention tools, all in a single, simple and fully supported environment. All applicants are pre-screened so you only get candidates who are high matches for your specific job.

**INSPIRATIONAL KEYNOTE SPEAKERS** Take your leadership team to the next level with custom H-Squared Leadership Workshops. A custom talk can be an inspirational gift to your colleagues and your clients! Illinois Chamber members can benefit from motivation provided by H-Squared Leadership Institute.

**CUSTOM ON-SITE HR TRAINING** The Illinois Chamber can provide on-site training for 10 or more employees at your worksite. Chamber members receive 25-30% off individual tuition prices to train your managers, supervisors or employees without sending them out to a seminar. Programs can be customized to fit your company's needs.

**HOTEL DISCOUNTS** Receive the Illinois Chamber member preferred rate when you stay at Langham House Chicago or Kimpton Hotels Chicago or the State House Inn in Springfield.



**Illinois Chamber**

@ILChamber

The Unifying Voice for Business in Illinois.



**Illinois Chamber @ILChamber Oct 20**

**@ILChamber** advocates met with Cong. **@PeterRoskam** to discuss much-needed **#TaxReform** and how it would affect businesses in Illinois.



**Justin Hakes @justinhakes Oct 11**

**@LegalReform** & **@ILChamber**: Illinois' lawsuit climate is yet another weight on its economy

**Illinois Chamber @ILChamber Oct 10**

"Every state wants investment within their boundaries," said Todd Maisch, president and CEO of the **@ILChamber**



**Bruce Rauner @GovRauner Sep 29**

Let's make IL a go for business. Yesterday I asked **@ILChamber** members to get on board.



**Mr. Lee Foley @LeAaronFoley Sep 28**

Proud to represent Amazon at the **@ILChamber** annual luncheon. Two awards for economic development--we are thrilled.

**Illinois Chamber @ILChamber Sep 22**

We applaud **@GovRauner** for vetoing HB 3449. Hear from **@ILChamber's** Director of Legislative Relations Tyler Diers on the issue. #twill #probiz





ILLINOIS CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE

Coming in 2018

## Certification Programs

Human Resource Compliance

Management & Supervision Compliance

Workers' Compensation & Safety Compliance

Educational Achievement

Webinars

Safety Seminars

Online Courses

Professional Advancement

*Earn your certification*

[www.ilchamber.org](http://www.ilchamber.org)



# SmithAmundsen

proud **member** and **sponsor**  
of the

## Illinois Chamber of Commerce

Our philosophy is simple – put the client first. Our more than 170 attorneys spend each day providing exceptional client service to commercial organizations in the areas of labor and employment, litigation and business transactions. Our clients are *Fortune* 500 companies, manufacturers, farmers, restaurant owners, government agencies, pilots, insurers, financial institutions and small business owners among hundreds of others.

Our strength is our commitment to understanding clients' business objectives and successfully partnering with them to meet those objectives. We value long-term relationships with our clients because when we genuinely understand the industries in which our clients operate, we are able to provide more strategic and innovative legal advice.

A **FULL SERVICE** business law firm with a simple promise - **PUT YOU FIRST**

### LABOR & EMPLOYMENT

- Employee Benefits & Compensation
- Employment Law
- Government Regulation, Audit & Compliance
- Immigration
- OSHA
- Public Sector
- Staffing Agency, Independent Contractor & Contingent Workforce
- Traditional Labor & Union Relations
- Unfair Competition Counseling & Litigation
- Wage & Hour
- Workers' Compensation

### BUSINESS & TRANSACTIONS

- Banking & Financial Institutions
- Corporate & Securities
- Employee Benefits & Compensation
- Estate & Business Planning
- Insolvency & Restructuring
- Intellectual Property
- Real Estate
- Tax



Visit our blog: [www.laborandemploymentlawupdate.com](http://www.laborandemploymentlawupdate.com)

**Jeffrey Risch**  
630.569.0079  
[jrisch@salawus.com](mailto:jrisch@salawus.com)

#### CONTACT US

- [www.saLAWus.com](http://www.saLAWus.com)
- 312-894-3200
- [smithamundsen@salawus.com](mailto:smithamundsen@salawus.com)
- 150 N. Michigan Ave, Suite 3300 Chicago, IL 60601

#### LOCATIONS

- |                  |                 |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Chicago, IL      | St. Charles, IL |
| Indianapolis, IN | St. Louis, MO   |
| Milwaukee, WI    | Woodstock, IL   |
| Rockford, IL     |                 |